Robot Ethics, Part 2 -

Does “no” mean “no” when a robot says it?

As a general rule, any technology that can be used for sex will be used for sex.
~ Mike LaBossiere
Philosopher and *The Philosophers’ Magazine* Blog Contributor

...from my experience as a roboticist it seems that a large proportion of science-fiction consumers are comfortable with a conclusion that anything that perceives, communicates and remembers is owed ethical obligation. In fact, many people seem not only comfortable with this idea, but proud of having come to this realization, and willing to angrily defend their perspective.
~ Joanna Bryson
AI researcher and roboticist
“Robots Should Be Slaves”

Robot In Love by Rudy Faber

What’s going to happen when—for the first time—a robot says “No” to something a human asks it to do? Are we going to say, “‘No’ does *not* mean ‘no’ when a robot says it”? What if the thing asked of it is sex?[1]

1. What’s going to happen *the first time* will likely be the assumption of a programmer’s joke.

Given what we know about the history of human nature, it is more likely that robots will be victimized by us *before* we will be victimized by them.

Love is about to get even more complicated… Mady Delvaux a member of the European parliament is now (2017) proposing a new class of "persons" by:

> ...creating a specific legal status for robots, so that at least the most sophisticated autonomous robots could be established as having the status of electronic persons with specific rights and obligations... (Delvaux 2016, p. 12).[2]

Philosophers Lily Frank and Sven Nyholm elaborate:

> ...there is a list of key characteristics of the sorts of robots Delvaux has in mind: they need a certain amount of functional autonomy, capacities for learning, 'physical support', and the capacity to adapt to the environment (Ibid., 6). The main examples of such robots given are autonomous vehicles, care robots, medical robots, drones, and robotic technologies for human repair and enhancement.

Just the toy part of the sex business is a 15 billion dollar industry (soon to be 50 billion if you believe *Forbes*). It shouldn't surprise us if, just as space programs led to development of many technologies that have advanced civilization, research and development into human-like robots will be heavily sponsored by the sex toy industry. Frank and Nyholm continue:

> The company 'TrueCompanion.com' claims to sell 'the world's first sex robot'. This robot is called 'Roxxxy'. According to the website advertising this robot, the company has spent 'many years' developing Roxxxy, making sure that she:
>
> > ...knows your name, your likes and dislikes, can carry on a discussion and express her love to you and be your loving friend. She can talk to you, listen to you and feel your touch. She can even have an orgasm!
>
> The company promises that soon, they'll also start selling a male counterpart to Roxxxy, called 'Rocky.' Other companies are developing similar sex robots.[3]

2. See "Give robots 'personhood' status, EU committee argues" Alex Hern, *The Guardian*, January 12, 2017. Also "Giving robots 'personhood' is actually about making corporations accountable" James Vincent, *The Verge*, Jan 19, 2017. As noted in this article, the immediate motivation for introducing the legal notion of an "electronic person" may be legal expediency, but there is clear awareness of the moral undertones. Though this attention, by itself, proves nothing about how serious or urgent these concerns are, it is all that is necessary to evoke the philosophical topic, which is always about what is conceivable given what we know. The general rule is that, after due consideration, if we can think it, it will happen.

3. Lily Frank and Sven Nyholm, "Robot sex and consent: Is consent to sex between a robot and a human

And it wouldn't be the first time moral and legal theoreticians have pulled whole new categories of normative concern out of the air. The "corporate person," decked out with privileges and duties, was a purpose-built legal concept, a legal contraption. Indeed, the very term "person," freighted with all the moral and legal baggage, was itself not long ago in the history of ideas a mere philosophical "brainchild."

Human-robot interaction and ethics

In Part 1, we introduced a latent dilemma in the development of artificial intelligence. Either AI succeeds or it doesn't. If it succeeds, it will have to face serious moral obstacles. If the effort fails, whatever else stands in its way, it will escape moral concerns. The escape, in fact, will be a mark of failure. Relevant *successful* AI will entail membership in a moral community.

First, the relevant definition of AI in this discussion is artifactual intelligence that is recognized as such by those non-technical "naturally intelligent" entities it may interact with, i.e., ordinary people.[4] "Intelligence" used in a sense specific to a specialized domain where it is targeted at distinct tasks as in military, industrial, medical or other technical applications (e.g., drones, self-driving cars, reconnaissance, exploratory, or search-and-recovery devices) is *perhaps*[5] more accurately understood as a metaphorical use of the term. The ordinary use of the word "intelligence" is anthropogenic. Purpose-built, technical AI is best seen as "sophisticated technology" or "advanced tool-making." The use of "intelligence" in its description is playing with moral fire. Its intelligence-like properties need not and likely should not be generalized in order to cross domains of expertise. Its intelligence should not be versatile in the way we expect of the human (and animal) sort… Or, if it does, then it will entail becoming entangled in age-old controversies in the history of ethics.[6] The relevant "I" in "AI" here is the kind whose features or behavior reminds human beings of themselves in the way many animals may.

Another factor in human/robot relations is the presence of recognizable physiognomic features

conceivable, possible, and desirable?," *Artificial Intelligence and Law*, September 2017, Volume 25, Issue 3, pp 305–323.

4. "Intelligence," of course, is not a precise concept, see Legg and Hutter, "A Collection of Definitions of Intelligence." Nevertheless, I think, what the unschooled or undisciplined opinion on the matter of a person on the street cannot count for nothing if such are a target for believing in and acting on and with AI.

5. The hesitancy here is due to the fact that while the human/AI interaction is these more abstracted cases is significantly different from the potentially extreme intimacy involved in relations with sex/love robots, some of the same ethical concerns arise in those cases as well. We will explore this in Part 3 of this series which will deal specifically with apportioning responsibility in the use of self-driving cars and the role of ethical theory in the design of the algorithms that will govern their decision-making.

6. AI scientist Joanna Bryson warns of this and suggests that we get our heads straight about robots from the start and *stop seeing them as anything but* advanced tools or extensions of our own abilities. Call them "slaves," she says. Don't even think the word "autonomous." While we disagree with the efficacy, if not also the ethics, of this way of avoiding the inevitable, she is right to sound an alarm.

(limbs, heads, eyes, ears, faces, sex characteristics, etc.) and/or animation. And although not necessary, it facilitates engagement with our empathetic imagination. If the so-called "intelligence" does both—looks even remotely animal and responds to environmental stimulus in ways that recall, if not rational, at least, sentient properties of entities like ourselves, it is especially vulnerable to acquiring moral status.

Further, if AI is perceived as self-generating interests, such as a preference for persisting or a sense of its physical integrity, and gives expression to these, moral status will be, in virtue of that fact by itself, inevitable.[7] And once acquired, the ethical trouble starts.

Sex and love are not the same, but...

While sex and love may be separable, it is naive to think that one does not lead to the other.[8] This fact places pressure on sex robots to become capable love robots. Love is a vastly more complicated psychological and cultural phenomenon requiring subtle moral norms that place boundaries on what is acceptable. Then, if moral considerations—respectful mutual regard—aren't there from the start of the interaction, they will most certainly impose themselves on the relation. Sex robots, even before they become love interests, may claim rights to bodily integrity. They may have legitimate claims against being sexually harassed or raped.

That, or we never succeed at making AI sufficiently convincing to spark the amount of imagination required to move from instrumental sex to the mutuality of love. But given the reach of our empathetic imagination, AI needn't—merely in virtue of its features alone—be that convincing. It is enough to raise concerns if our EI will meet AI halfway or more. There is evidence our EI is fully capable of it and will become more so.

This is the price we pay for making things sufficiently like us to exploit the way we do each other. It applies to all our creations, artificial and otherwise—as much to robots as to children.

7. If you wonder why "inevitable," consider the moral dissonance otherwise. How will we justify giving moral status to some but not all rationally autonomous entities? How will we justify giving moral status to some but not all entities subject to negative and positive valence states. See our discussion of Thomas Metzinger in Part 1. A moral stink will accompany attempts at selective justification.

8. It should be needless to say that there are evolutionary reasons for this. While sexuality is highly adaptive to environmental and social forces, and—taking a long view—evolutionary ones, too, the evolutionary near-term will likely be accelerated beyond what slower natural forces can account for. The human-induced near-term evolution is likely to be piecemeal, uneven, and disruptive. The end will no doubt be extinction (*a la* Benatar), or the transmogrification of the human into something beyond anything we are currently in a position to theorize about. This arises when considering the transhumanist movement. Sex will be the first human pleasure to become superfluous. Then Love. Then human existence. (I mean "human" as something we are now, not as we might become.)

Just when will ethics matter to AI?

A friend sent me this article: "The Dark Secret at the Heart of AI." It sketches a not unfamiliar idea, though one that benefits from a little corroboration: the idea that so long as AI remains perfectly predictable, because we program it to do the things it does, it is explainable, in principle—at least by its human programmers. But when it begins to program itself, to set its own course—say, as result of learning algorithms and exposure to a teaching environment, we begin to lose insight into why it does what it does. Even as its actions may be rational in context and in hindsight, because the etiology is not, we are challenged not to see, at least, moral patiency, if not agency, as well. It will creep within range of moral radar in the way animals and small children do—and, more like the latter, eventually toward the center of that range.

This matters. Reverse engineering principles of action—motives—is, in principle, tricky business even in the human-human context.[9] At this point, we are truly in new territory. That's when we will have to face the possibility of real intelligence, no longer *merely* artificial, both like and unlike, that of other human persons. Like us, in that we may recognize that it has purpose and agenda. Unlike us, in that because we don't share the same evolutionary or causal history we have no idea how it comes to have its purposes and agendas.

This will make these entities both alien *and* morally relevant. This is because moral concerns arise precisely because fellow members of the agential community are not completely transparent. This opaqueness is at that heart of why respect is demanded in such relationships. If I know you inside out, we have a case for saying you are *not* fully distinct from me. Your opaqueness, the fact that I am twice[10] removed from what is going on inside you, is what demands respect.

And this is why empathetic imagination becomes critical for our relations with such entities. How to transcend the opaqueness? Since we are far from infallible with regard to each other, we have cause to respect where we do not understand. Proper ethical regard becomes a call for both empathy and suspicion. Just as in human-human relationships.

(Listen to John Danaher's interview with AI philosopher David Gunkel for more detail on this topic. Also relevant are Danaher's interview with computer scientist and roboticist Joanna Bryson, and Kate Darling's video on Ethical issues in human-robot interaction.)

9. Thus, Kant speculated that perhaps not once in human history has a single moral act ever occurred. Leaving aside the inferential nature of guessing those of others, our *own* motives are opaque even—and *especially*—to us due to the absence of disinterestedness and the sky-scraping standards of lucidity that Kant (at least) required of a moral act.

10. Twice, because of the inferential nature of my knowledge of you *and* because even I had the same first-person acquaintance you have, I would be encumbered with interestedness, see previous note.

“Close encounters of the closest kind”

Few, if any, human relationships demand as much scrutiny of the speech and behavior of another intelligence as when the relationship is intimate. Rational self-interest and ethical consciousness conspire to force caution. Thus, sexual relationships are the perfect “test bed” (pun-intended) or acid test for evaluating the credibility of a claim to relevant intelligence in an AI entity. They are, in effect, the ultimate Turing test. The repertoire of convincing human-like moves an AI needs to master in order to convincingly serve as our barista is relatively minimal in comparison. Our requirements become vastly more stringent before we make ourselves vulnerable to losing our hearts. *Or should...* And to the extent you are comfortable with demanding less than this, you are, to that extent, making AI easier—not by advancing the sophistication of AI but by dumbing down what it is to be authentically human or an evolved natural intelligence.

The consent requirement is stiff in these parts

But what exactly constitutes consent? *Something other than “no”?* Is tacit consent possible in this kind of interaction? Absolutely not. Not the first time and perhaps not even for a very long time after that. There are too many reasons why silence may not be consent. It takes a tremendous amount of prior familiarity with the other party to pick up with any degree of accuracy non-verbal cues and interpret context. More so because the stakes are high.

An explicit “yes”? Not even that always. As philosophers from Onora O’Neill to Catherine McKinnon have long pointed out, background conditions often *morally* invalidate a “yes.” Differences in power are the most obvious invalidator. When a supervisor at work asks you to do something, are you always free to say “no”? If they ask for your frank evaluation of a situation, are you free to say what you really think or feel? If yes, this means you have an extraordinary supervisor, or you and they were best buddies *before* being supervisor and supervisee, or you can spare this job or you are a volunteer. Otherwise, though your expressed or implicit “yes” may be a perfectly legal “yes”—a transactional “yes,” it will fail as a moral “yes.” We seem to be ok with selling precious many hours of our lives for money. It’s called “work.” Why not then our bodies? Why then would our time be *less* precious?

Intimate relationships are too bound up with a concern for emotional and physical integrity to be entered into without a more thorough-going *lucid* consent. To the extent actual instances of consent fail to be thoroughly lucid or taken between *equals* in such relationships, to that extent they are less than moral.

It’s been noted, for example, that transactions with a high-end prostitute, where the parties have no illusions about what each is losing and gaining—and where both parties feel they are being well compensated for their expenditure—might be considered among the purest[11] morally.

11. This would follow rigorously if hypocrisy is considered the worst of sins. For a brief discussion of why one might think prostitution *only* as immoral (or not) as most other paid labor, see this blog post: “The Ethics of

Transparency and parity of power makes this possible. Some kind of fore- or background coercion is almost always afoot where there is epistemic opaqueness or power disparity.[12]

Can one lucidly and willingly consent where there is disparity of power? Usually not. Unless, perhaps, one is governed by moral forces that have less to do with rights[13] than with fatalistic duty.

> In 2005, the newlywed Melania Trump addressed a business class at New York University. A student asked the supermodel if she would still be with Donald Trump if he was not rich. "If I weren't beautiful, do you think he'd be with me?" she quipped.[14]

Fatalism about being damned (by wealth or beauty) and the pawn of (social) forces greater than (sometimes overrated) claims of the rational autonomy can "trump" defensible moral judgment. If the deal is, in the end, transactional, it is, by definition, void of romance. But the thrill of *not* being entirely in control is real, tragic, and very human.[15]

Humans have a robust knack for seeing romance in any scene, context, or relationship. This is empathetic imagination at its most breathtaking. Consider *objectum sexuality* (see note below) and the evolutionary suggestion that the phenomenon is on the rise. It is, like other forms of non-reproductive sexuality, a natural population control mechanism. Nature may be giving us a hint.[16]

Slave or paid labor

Isn't labor-saving, perhaps, the major motivation in the creation of AI? And isn't a slave the ultimate labor-saving machine? Is a sex toy a labor-saving device? And isn't sexual enslavement of the vulnerable still today a major problem?

To save oneself labor, another agent or entity has to do it. If the other agent is a proper tool, we don't invite moral considerations. But let the other rise to the level of engaging us at levels that spark our EI—which is what sex/love robot enthusiasts aspire to—and the picture begins to look

Prostitution" by Michael LaBossiere.

12. There are serious difficulties with even the *possibility* of transparency in these contexts, but I leave them aside for now. The point here is the lack of concern for energetic effort at transparency.

13. As is usually the case in Western moral contexts, most particularly where classical liberal assumptions about the significance of free agency prevail.

14. Farrah Alexander, "Melania Trump Summed Up Her Tragic Marriage In One Response," *Huffington Post*, May 23, 2017.

15. So what if I am being *used*?... if I am sufficiently aware of the score, I am *using* as well. Not surprisingly, Kant was leary of sexual relationships: either they were cases of mutual abuse or, sadly, naive. The best we can hope for in this inherently amoral (but not *necessarily* immoral) intercourse is that the parties are on the same page: both innocent or both partners in moral crime, and not one one and the other the other.

16. Romance is life-affirming… until it's not, until it exhausts our resources.

like sexual slavery. We might lessen the moral impact by *paying* the slave, thereby implicating them as moral co-conspirators. But then we may wonder if having to pay robots for services rendered does not knock some of the wind out of AI enthusiasm.

How would you "pay" a robot? You ask it what it would like. If it can't give you an answer, you have failed at AI.

Resources

Lily Frank and Sven Nyholm, "Robot sex and consent: Is consent to sex between a robot and a human conceivable, possible, and desirable?," *Artificial Intelligence and Law*, September 2017, Volume 25, Issue 3, pp 305–323. (Pdf is open access.)

"Robots Should Be Slaves" by AI scientist, Joanna Bryson, *Close Engagements with Artificial Companions: Key social, psychological, ethical and design issue*, Yorick Wilks (ed.), John Benjamins, 2010.

"Robot Love," Sven Nyholm interviewed by David Edmonds, *Philosophy 24/7*

"Can Robots Love Us?" *BBC Three*, Sep 4, 2017.

"So I'm Marrying A Robot: Love & Tech," *CNN*, March 2017.

Mark D. Griffiths, In Excess "Intimate and Inanimate: A brief look at objectum sexuality," *Psychology Today*, Posted Jul 25, 2013.

Nathan Heller, "If Animals Have Rights, Should Robots?" *The New Yorker*, November, 2016.

"Meet Sophia: The first robot declared a citizen by Saudi Arabia" Description: "The so called "rise of the machines" has started, and it looks like obtaining citizenship is the first step. A robot named "Sophia" has made history, as it became the first ever to be granted a full Saudi Arabian citizenship. Developed by AI specialist David Hanson of Hanson Robotics, Sophia's appointment was made public during the Future Investment Initiative held in the Saudi Arabian capital of Riyadh."

"What Exactly Does It Mean to Give a Robot Citizenship? It's complicated. Sophia, a robot recently granted citizenship in Saudi Arabia," By John Frank Weaver, Slate, Nov. 6 2017 7:15 AM.

"World's first robot 'citizen' says she wants to start a family," Ally Foster, news.com.au

November 27, 20178:47pm. Description: "SOPHIA, the first robot in the world to be given citizenship, has hinted that she wants to start a family. She even knows what she wants to name her first daughter."

Mike LaBossiere—I found as I was researching this topic—anticipated many of the points I developed independently in this writeup. You may find his writeup more to the point. See especially his posts midway down the page, "Programmed Consent" and "Sexbots are Persons, Too?" here: http://blog.talkingphilosophy.com/?tag=artificial-intelligence&paged=2

On the fear that sex robots will further objectify and demean women and the feminine, see the web site see The Campaign Against Sex Robots, founded by Kathleen Richardson, Professor of Ethics and Culture of Robots and AI, De Montfort University.
https://campaignagainstsexrobots.org/

John Danaher, Brian D. Earp, and Anders Sandberg, "Should we campaign against sex robots?" *Robot Sex: Social and Ethical Implications*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2017. The authors offer counterarguments to the claims by The Campaign Against Sex Robots.

The jacket description of a book by John Danaher and Neil McArthur (editors), *Robot Sex: Social and Ethical Implications* (MIT Press, October 13, 2017):

> Perspectives from philosophy, psychology religious studies, economics, and law on the possible future of robot-human sexual relationships.
>
> Sexbots are coming. [pun?] Given the pace of technological advances, it is inevitable that realistic robots specifically designed for people's sexual gratification will be developed in the not-too-distant future. Despite popular culture's fascination with the topic, and the emergence of the much-publicized Campaign Against Sex Robots, there has been little academic research on the social, philosophical, moral, and legal implications of robot sex. This book fills the gap, offering perspectives from philosophy, psychology, religious studies, economics, and law on the possible future of robot-human sexual relationships.
>
> Contributors discuss what a sex robot is, if they exist, why we should take the issue seriously, and what it means to 'have sex' with a robot. They make the case for developing sex robots, arguing for their beneficial nature, and the case against it, on religious and moral grounds; they consider the subject from the robot's perspective, addressing such issues as consent and agency; and they ask whether it is possible for a human to form a mutually satisfying, loving relationship with a robot. Finally, they speculate about the future of human-robot sexual interaction, considering the social acceptability of sex robots and the possible effect on society.

Contributors

Marina Adshade, Thomas Arnold, Julie Carpenter, John Danaher, Brian Earp, Lily Eva Frank, Joshua Goldstein, Michael Hauskeller, Noreen Herzfeld, Neil McArthur, Mark Migotti, Sven Nyholm, Ezio di Nucci, Steve Petersen, Anders Sandberg, Matthias Scheutz, Litska Strikwerda, Nicole Wyatt

Note on functionalism[17] as a model of literal (not metaphorical) AI

Do most serious computer scientists and neuroscientists actually believe the functionalist argument that the brain is like a computer? Yes and no, increasingly, no. Rather, the reverse: a computer is like a tiny part of the brain—as in 1/17billionth (maybe much less) of a brain. See Mark Humphries "Your Cortex Contains 17 Billion Computers Neural networks of neural networks," *The Spike*, Feb 12, 2018.

However, while multiple realizability, a functionalist notion, may not be at the heart of a correct theory of mind, it may well model how empathetic imagination in those minds like ours is triggered. The objects of our minds need only display function to spark EI. Looking and doing like a duck is often sufficiently duckish to pass for normative purposes. Ontological precision is not an ethical imperative. Appearance and circumstances, while not *legally* sufficient to incriminate, *morally* they are.

In *The Strange Order of Things* Antonio Damasio suggest that feelings are an unstoppable biological force. What the body feels is every bit as significant as what the mind thinks, the neuroscientist argues. He turns to emotions to explain human consciousness and cultures.

Note on empathetic imagination (EI): noise / sound /music

This idea was introduced in Part One, but more should be said about it, since I think it may be confused with something else.

Consider this:

CATcerto. ORIGINAL PERFORMANCE. Mindaugas Piecaitis, Nora The Piano Cat

We are amused at Nora and the Catcerto… But we should note how willing we are to imagine that Nora somehow knows something of what she is doing, or how willing we are to believe she

17. "Functionalism is a theory about the nature of mental states. According to functionalists, mental states are identified by what they do rather than by what they are made of. Functionalism is the most familiar or 'received' view among philosophers of mind and cognitive science." - IEP (http://www.iep.utm.edu/functism/).

is giving some kind of order and structure and even emotional meaning to her random actions. *If we weren't ready to play along with this idea on some level, I don't think there would be anything engaging about the video at all.* I'm pretty sure many people can't help imagining that Nora really enjoys making these sounds, that somehow they are not really entirely random, not anymore than the random notes that we make and call "music." Certainly, the composer empathetically embellishes Nora's sparse notes, and the audience responds predictably. If you find yourself complaining that there is little evidence to justify this kind of psychological projection or anthropomorphizing, you are missing the point. It's not knowledge in the propositional sense we are addressing here but our contribution to the organization of the information we have or imagine we have. You *could* "organize" Nora's behavior by saying she is a sucker for attention and has found a way to manipulate her owner to get it... *Yes, and you could say exactly the same about human "performers."* In some sense, the sounds we call "music" are random, too. But it doesn't feel that way. *And, when it doesn't feel that way, we call noise "music."* (For some of the problems that arise when we ask "what is music?" see the SEP entry.

It's clear we are adding something to the raw experience of sound. I think we do this constantly with almost every experience. It's part of how we cope with otherwise chaos and alienating chance. Empathetic imagination is a kind of *experience enhancement* that happens with consciousness-numbing regularity in our interactions with other people: And why not with animals, plants, places, times, inanimate objects—especially if they give us anything to latch onto, something to hook our imaginations to? *And the hook needn't be much.* This is what I mean by empathetic imagination or EI. (Again, EI is closely connected to how we cope, in practice, with the ancient problem of "Other Minds" in philosophy. Some inferences fit experience so like a glove that we forget they are playing a necessary prophylactic role, warding off utter isolation. It bears noting that merely to describe such as an "inference" is to obfuscate its immediacy.)

A trial definition for the concept of *empathetic imagination*: it is to imbue a person, an animal, a plant, an object, a place, a time, a thing, etc. with significance beyond any that a particle physicist would... And not doing it alone. (The particle physicist, as such, just flirts with a minimalist EI.)

"Seeing things in things that aren't there, together with other people, constitutes life." ~ Bianco Luno

Still on the subject of EI: see:

Darling, Kate and Nandy, Palash and Breazeal, Cynthia, "Empathic concern and the effect of stories in human-robot interaction," *Proceedings of the IEEE International Workshop on Robot and Human Communication (ROMAN)*, 2015.

Darling, Kate, "'Who's Johnny?' Anthropomorphic Framing in Human-Robot Interaction,

Integration, and Policy" (March 23, 2015). ROBOT ETHICS 2.0, eds. P. Lin, G. Bekey, K. Abney, R. Jenkins, Oxford University Press, 2017, Forthcoming. Available at SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=2588669 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2588669

Note on objectum sexuality

This is the current outer edge on the spectrum of sexual orientation: the extension of sexual affinity to inanimate objects.

Consider the documentary on Erika Eiffel: *Married To The Eiffel Tower.*

In objectum sexuality, EI pushes entirely past appearance, material substrate, animation, intelligence, reciprocity, autonomy, etc. as indicators of appropriate objects of empathetic regard. You might say this is EI at its purest. Needless to say, we are not all capable of it. But "normal" people do, as a matter of fact, partake in some degree of this capacity for imagining what may not be there past the point where it ceases to matter whether it is there or not in an "objective" sense—*assuming anything at all matters in that sense.*

Work space - ideas here will be incorporated into writeup above

"Apple and Amazon are under fire for Siri and Alexa's responses to sexual harassment," Leah Fessler, Quartz at Work, December 8, 2017"
https://work.qz.com/1151282/siri-and-alexa-are-under-fire-for-their-replies-to-sexual-harassment/

"The Dangers of Artificial Intelligence - Robot Sophia makes fun of Elon Musk - A.I. 2017"
https://youtu.be/GzdY3gwE0WQ

"Robot Sophia Got Shut Down by her Creator"
https://youtu.be/SNT7qGqmYfc

Sophia sings and quotes Nietzsche:
https://youtu.be/KEgUZYo0OsU

…

John Danaher's podcast site devoted to discussion of "Algocracy and the Transhumanist Project

The future of governance and values in the post-human era." Particularly relevant episodes:

Episode #7 - "Brett Frischmann on Reverse Turing Tests and Machine-like Humans," posted on July 15, 2016 by John Danaher.
"This is the 7th episode of the Algocracy and Transhumanism Podcast. In this episode I talk to Brett Frischmann about his work on human-focused Turing Tests. Brett is a Professor of Law at Cardozo Law School in New York City. He writes a lot about technology and law, and is currently in the midst of co-authoring a book with Evan Selinger (my guest in Episode 4) entitled *Being Human in the 21st Century* (Cambridge University Press 2017). We have a long and wide-ranging conversation about what it means to be a machine; what it means to be a human; and how the current techno-social environment is changing who we are."
https://algocracy.wordpress.com/2016/07/15/episode-7-brett-frischmann-on-reverse-turing-tests-and-machine-like-humans/

Episode #10 - "David Gunkel on Robots and Cyborgs," posted on August 27, 2016 by John Danaher.
"This is the tenth episode in the Algocracy and Transhumanism Podcast. In this episode I talk to David Gunkel. David is a professor of communication studies at Northern Illinois University. He specialises in the philosophy and ethics of technology. He is the author of several books, including Hacking Cyberspace, The Machine Question and Of Remixology. I talk to David about two main topics: (i) robot rights and responsibilities and (ii) the cyborgification of society."
https://algocracy.wordpress.com/2016/08/27/episode-10-david-gunkel-on-robots-and-cyborgs/

Episode #24 - "Bryson on Why Robots Should be Slaves," posted on June 7, 2017 by John Danaher.
"In this episode I interview Joanna Bryson. Joanna is Reader in Computer Science at the University of Bath. Joanna's primary research interest lies in using AI to understand natural intelligence, but she is also interested in the ethics of AI and robotics, the social uses of robots, and the political and legal implications of advances in robotics. In the latter field, she is probably best known for her article, published in 2010 entitled 'Robots Should be Slaves'. We talk about the ideas and arguments contained in that paper as well as some related issues in roboethics."
https://algocracy.wordpress.com/2017/06/07/episode-24-bryson-on-why-robots-should-be-slaves/

The Philosophy Club in November 2019
Accessible at Archive.org

– Victor Muñoz
Seattle